

**DYNAMITE #5**

**CULLEN BUNN**

**GIOVANNI TIMPANO**

**MARCO LESKO**



# ***THE Shadow***



# ***THE** Shadow*®

WHO KNOWS WHAT EVIL LURKS  
IN THE HEARTS OF MEN?

THE SHADOW KNOWS!

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I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND, I TAKE NO *PLEASURE* IN KILLING YOU.



I FIND THAT *DIFFICULT* TO BELIEVE.

ESPECIALLY STARING DOWN THE BARREL OF *MY OWN GUN*.



IT'S *TRUE!*

THE TWO OF US--WE ARE STRUGGLING AGAINST THE *SAME ENEMY*.



THE SOCIETY OF UNITED MAGICIANS.



Heh.

IT WOULD SEEM TO ME THAT OUR FRIEND THE SHADOW HOLDS BOTH MY SOCIETY *AND* YOURS...

...IN *EQUAL CONTEMPT*.





DO YOU  
THINK HE CANNOT  
TELL THE DIFFERENCE  
BETWEEN A GROUP  
THAT WANTS TO *SAVE*  
THE WORLD...

...AND  
ONE THAT  
WANTS TO  
*DAMN* IT?

I CARE  
LITTLE FOR WHAT  
EITHER OF YOU  
HAVE TO SAY.

YOU BOTH  
HAVE *WICKED*  
SOULS...

...AND  
YOU WILL BE  
*PUNISHED*.



THERE YOU  
HAVE IT.



*BAH!*


IT  
DOES NOT  
MATTER.

TONIGHT,  
THE *DISCIPLES*  
OF *NITOCRIS* WILL  
STRIKE A TERRIBLE  
BLOW AGAINST  
OUR ENEMIES.




AND  
IN THIS, WE HAVE  
*RIGHTEOUSNESS*  
ON OUR SIDE.





THIS IS THE  
*TRUTH* OF  
THE *LAST*  
ILLUSION.

THIS IS  
THE WARNING  
LOVECRAFT  
TRIED TO  
OFFER HOUDINI  
IN LIFE.




AND IT IS  
THE *SAME* WARNING  
THAT HOUDINI, IN  
DEATH, DELIVERED  
TO HIS DEAR WIFE.



TRUE  
OR NOT...


...WHAT  
YOU ARE DOING  
HERE TONIGHT--  
IS *MADNESS*!



YOU WOULD  
DO *ANYTHING* TO  
SUCCEED IN YOUR  
CRUSADE AGAINST  
CRIME.

I WOULD  
DO ANYTHING TO  
SECURE OUR SAFETY  
AGAINST THE LAST  
ILLUSION.

WE'RE NOT  
SO DIFFERENT,  
YOU AND I.



IF THE SOCIETY  
WERE TO GET THEIR  
HANDS ON THE  
SECRET OF THE  
LAST ILLUSION...

...THEY  
WOULD USHER  
*TRUE MAGIC*  
BACK INTO THE  
WORLD...

...AND  
WITH IT...



"...THEY WOULD  
OPEN GATES THAT  
SHOULD REMAIN  
FOREVER SEALED."



YOU'RE  
WRONG.

THERE ARE  
INNOCENT  
PEOPLE IN  
THE THEATER  
TONIGHT.

IF  
YOU MURDER  
EVERYONE--

YES, YES.

THE  
GOOD WITH  
THE BAD.

BUT SACRIFICES  
MUST  
BE MADE.

YOU USE  
A GUN...

...WHILE  
I WIELD LESS...  
CONVENTIONAL  
WEAPONS.

MAKE SURE  
ALL THE EXITS  
ARE CHAINED  
TIGHTLY.

YES,  
DROGMAN.

NO ONE  
LEAVES BEFORE  
OUR BUSINESS  
IS FINISHED.





PERHAPS  
YOU'D LIKE TO  
**WITNESS**  
WHAT WE HAVE  
PLANNED?

AFTER ALL, THE  
SOCIETY PROMISED  
AN EVENING OF  
**ENTERTAINMENT.**



WHO AM  
I TO DENY  
THEIR **FINAL**  
**WISHES?**



WELL IT IS YOU,  
AFTER ALL, THAT IS  
ADDING THE NOTE OF  
**FINALITY** TO THESE  
PROCEEDINGS.



FAREWELL  
FOR NOW,  
GENTLEMEN.

I HAVE  
BUSINESS  
TO ATTEND.

AND WHEN I  
RETURN, I SHALL  
MAKE SURE OUR  
DISCUSSIONS ARE  
BROUGHT TO A  
**SATISFACTORY**  
CONCLUSION.



YOU...  
...STAY  
WITH THEM.



STAY  
**VIGILANT.**





MAKE SURE THEY DON'T TRY ANYTHING *TRICKY*.



YOU REALIZE THAT YOU TWO ARE *RUINING* MY NIGHT.

I FINALLY GET A JOB WITH A CREW MAKING A *BIG SPLASH*.



AND WHAT DO I GET TO DO?

I GET TO *BABYSIT* THE TWO OF YOU.



THERE ARE PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR A MAN SUCH AS YOURSELF TO BE A *PRODUCTIVE MEMBER* OF SOCIETY.

WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN TO EMBRACE A LIFE OF *CRIME*?

YOU DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT MY LIFE OR WHAT I HAVE DONE.

MY FATHER DIED WORKING ON THE DOCKS IN THIS CITY, LEFT ME AT ELEVEN TO FIND A WAY TO HELP MY MOM SURVIVE DAY TO DAY.



WHY DO YOU CALL YOURSELF *SHADOW* ANYWAY?

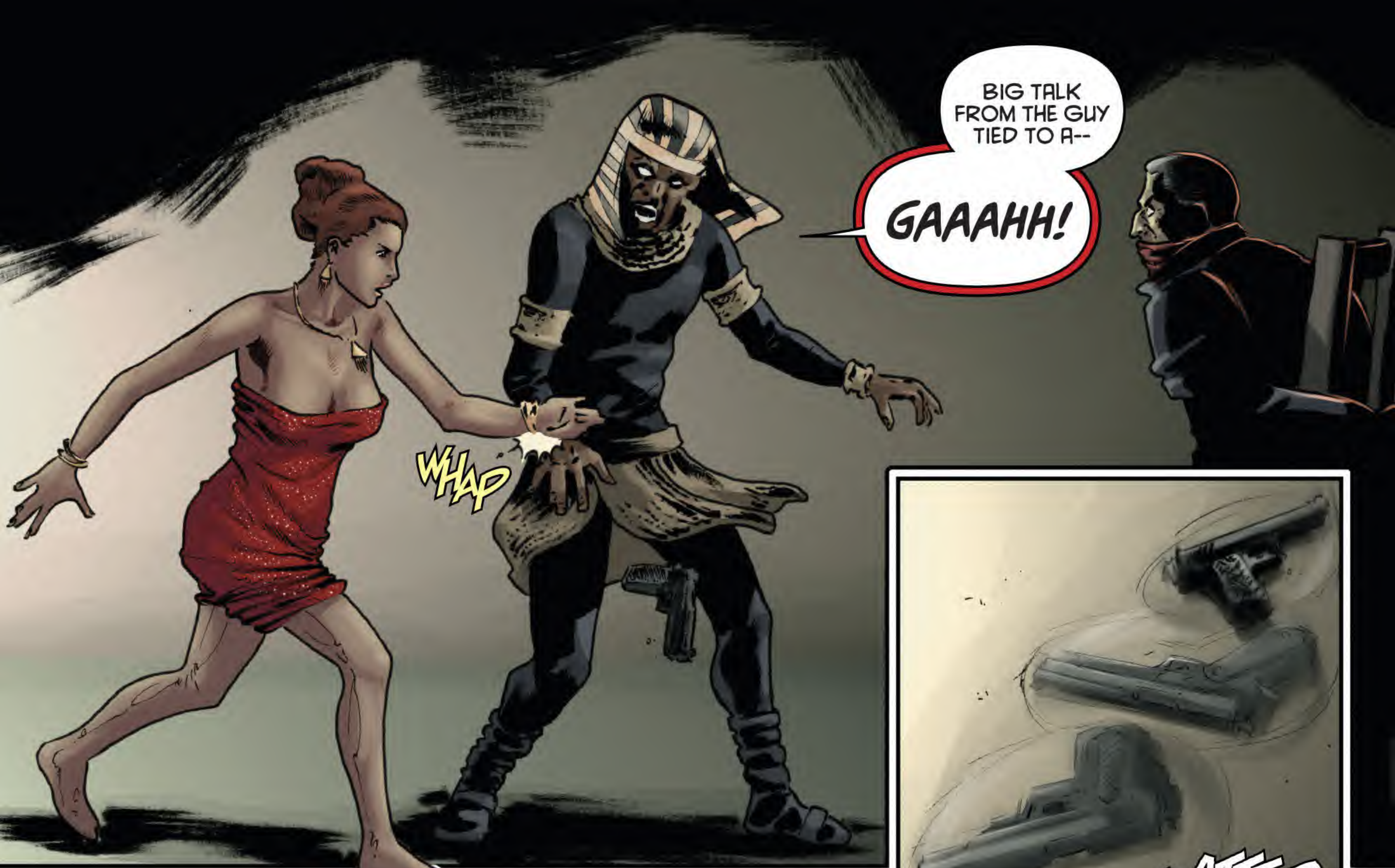
IF YOU WANT TO BE A SHADOW YOU SHOULDN'T WEAR THAT STUPID RED SCARF!



IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT I WEAR.

YOUR KIND *NEVER* SEES ME COMING AS I STRIKE FROM THE DARKNESS.

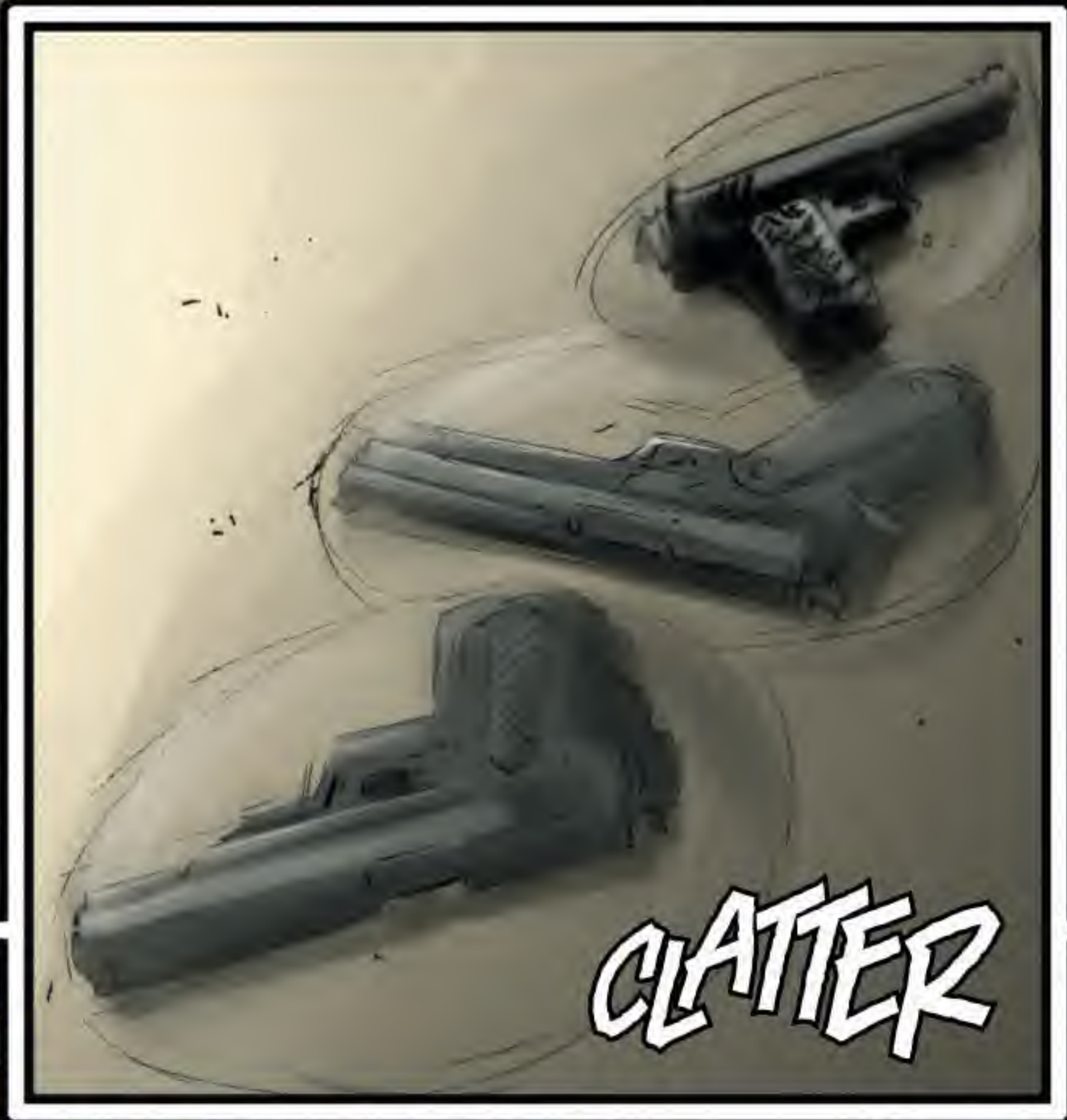




BIG TALK  
FROM THE GUY  
TIED TO A--

**GAAHH!**

**WHAP**



**CLATTER**



NOT SURE  
WHO THE HELL  
YOU ARE,  
BIMBO--

--BUT YOU  
JUST MADE  
THE **BIGGEST**  
MISTAKE OF  
YOUR LIFE.



**KI-YA!**

**WHUMP**



I WASN'T THE  
ONE *TALKING*  
WHEN I SHOULD  
HAVE BEEN  
*FIGHTING*.





NOT THAT  
YOU EVER  
STOOD A  
CHANCE.

**CHOK**



I KNEW YOU  
BROUGHT ME  
ALONG FOR A  
REASON.



MARGO,  
YOU HAVE ALWAYS  
BEEN AN AGENT I  
CAN COUNT ON.

I EXPECTED  
NO DIFFERENT  
FROM YOU  
TONIGHT.



NOW GIVE  
ME A HAND  
WITH THOSE  
ROPES.



Ah--

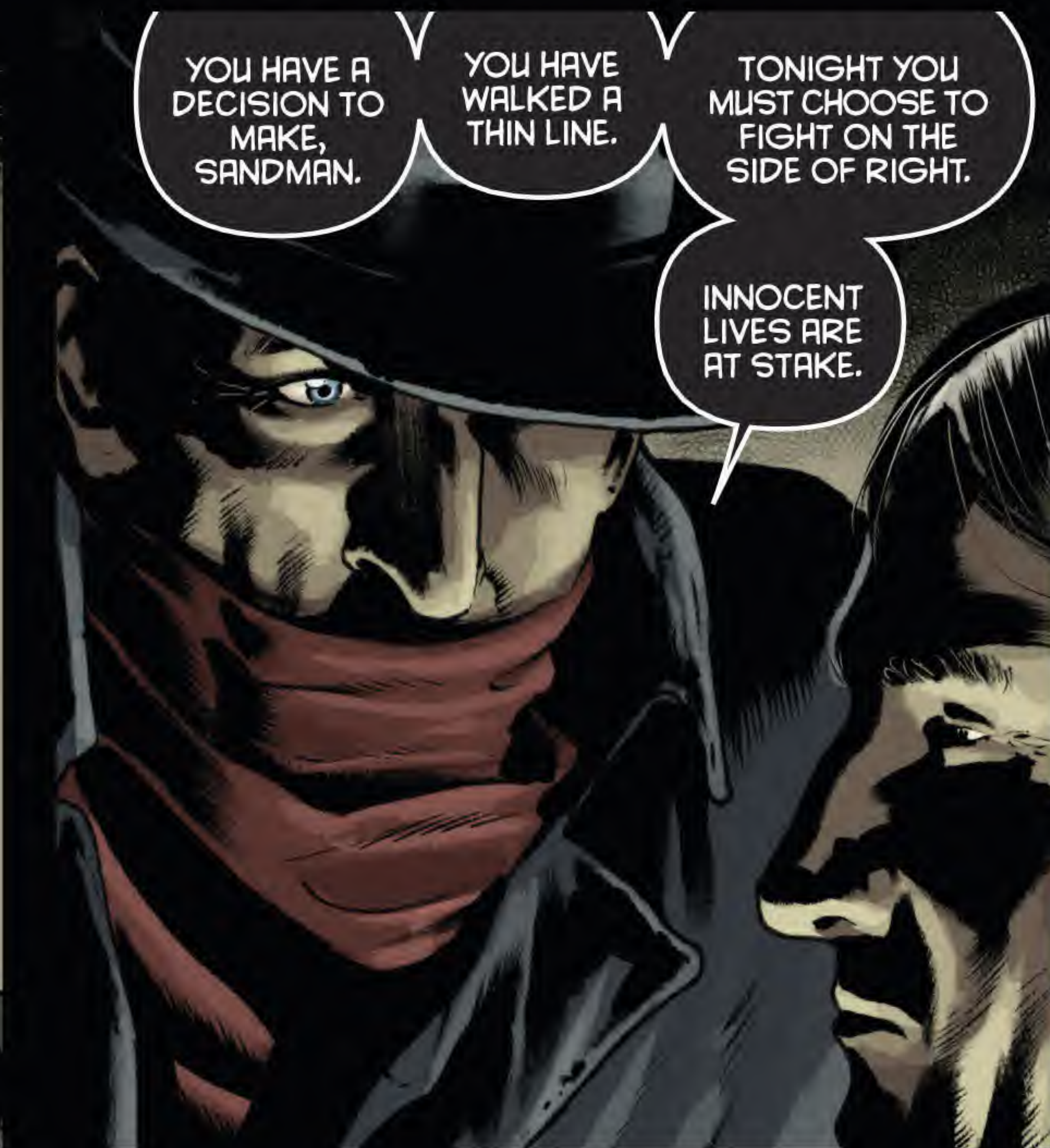
A LITTLE  
HELP HERE?





HELLO?

DON'T  
*FORGET*  
ABOUT ME.



YOU HAVE A  
DECISION TO  
MAKE,  
SANDMAN.

YOU HAVE  
WALKED A  
THIN LINE.

TONIGHT YOU  
MUST CHOOSE TO  
FIGHT ON THE  
SIDE OF RIGHT.

INNOCENT  
LIVES ARE  
AT STAKE.



I NOW HAVE  
*UNFINISHED BUSINESS*  
TO TEND TO WITH THIS  
DROGMAN AND HIS  
FLUNKIES.

YOUR  
GOALS...  
MINE...

...ARE  
ONE IN THE  
SAME.



Ahhh...

IT FEELS  
GOOD TO BE  
FREE ONCE  
MORE.

DO NOT  
MAKE ME  
*REGRET* MY  
DECISION.



YOU MIGHT  
NEED THESE.

YES.

THE AIR IS HEAVY  
WITH THE STINK  
OF *MURDEROUS*  
INTENT...





"...AND THERE WILL BE  
**BLOODSHED** TONIGHT!"



AND NOW,  
LADIES AND  
GENTLEMEN...

...FOR MY NEXT FEAT OF  
**PRESTIDIGITATION--**



**AHH--**



WHAT  
WAS THAT?

--PART OF  
THE ACT?

THE BLOOD  
LOOKS  
SO REAL.



GOOD EVENING,  
LADIES AND  
GENTLEMEN.





I'M AFRAID  
THERE HAS BEEN  
A CHANGE TO  
THE SCHEDULED  
PERFORMANCES  
TONIGHT.

THE REST OF  
THE EVENING'S  
ENTERTAINMENT  
SHALL BE--

--A **GRAND  
GUIGNOL!**



**YEEAAGGH!**



N-NO!

STAY  
BACK!



→GURGLE←



OPEN THE  
DOORS!

WE'RE  
LOCKED IN!

LET US  
OUT!



SOMEBODY!

PLEASE/  
DON'T--



**BLAM**





WHO KNOWS  
WHAT EVIL  
LURKS WITHIN  
THE HEARTS  
OF MEN?

*THE  
SHADOW  
KNOWS!*

**BLAM  
BLAM**







IT SEEMS  
DROGMAN HAS A  
FLARE FOR THE  
*DRAMATIC...*

...EVEN WHEN  
HIS PURPOSE  
IS *MURDER!*

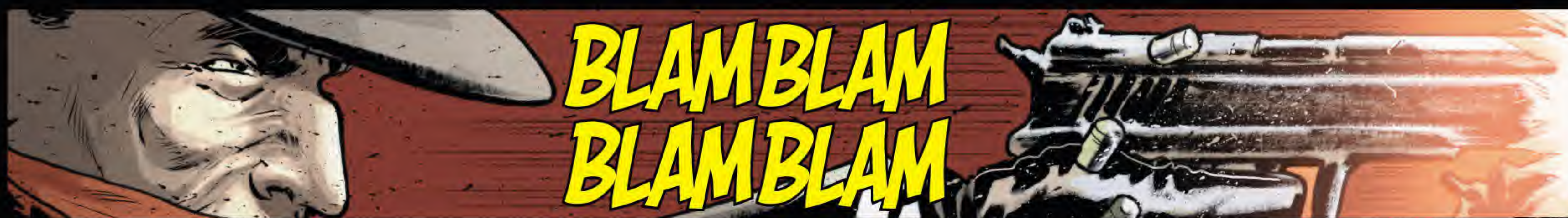
HE IS A  
*SHOWMAN* AFTER  
MY OWN HEART!



PROTECT  
AS MANY AS  
YOU CAN.

I SHALL  
*END* THIS.

NOW.



YOU THINK  
TO STOP US...

...TO SAVE  
THOSE WHO  
WOULD KILL YOU  
THEMSELVES IF  
THEY COULD.





**BLAM  
BLAM  
BLAM**

I SEEK ONLY  
*JUSTICE.*

YOU PERVERT AND  
TWIST A GREATER  
GOOD WITH YOUR  
OWN *HOMICIDAL*  
*DESIRES.*



YOU'RE  
ONE TO  
*TALK.*



THERE  
IS MORE BLOOD  
ON *YOUR* HANDS  
THAN MINE.



JUSTICE  
COMES FOR YOU,  
DROGMAN!





THE GOOD  
OF MANKIND  
TRUMPS YOUR  
PRECIOUS  
JUSTICE!



LIKE A SERPENT  
IN THE GRASS,  
JUSTICE IS EVER  
WATCHFUL...



...WAITING  
FOR THE  
MOMENT TO  
STRIKE.



OUR  
GOALS...

...ARE THE  
SAME...

...IF WE  
LET THEM  
SURVIVE...



...THEY'LL  
DESTROY  
EVERYTHING...

...THEY'LL  
AWAKEN...

...A GREAT  
EVIL--





HOUDINI'S  
SECRETS LED  
TO *WAR*.



A FEUD BETWEEN  
GANGS THE LIKES  
OF WHICH HAS  
NEVER BEEN SEEN.



TONIGHT  
THE WAR WAS  
BROUGHT TO  
AN END.



BUT AT  
WHAT COST?



WHO DIED  
HERE TONIGHT?

A TEACHER.  
A POLICEMAN.  
A DIPLOMAT.

AND A HANDFUL  
OF MAGICIANS  
WHO HUNGRED  
FOR *FORBIDDEN  
WISDOM*.



THE FUTURE IS  
*DARKER* FOR  
TONIGHT'S  
*BUTCHERY.*

I SAVED  
QUITE A FEW  
TONIGHT,  
SHADOW.

PERHAPS THE  
SCALES ARE  
*BALANCING.*

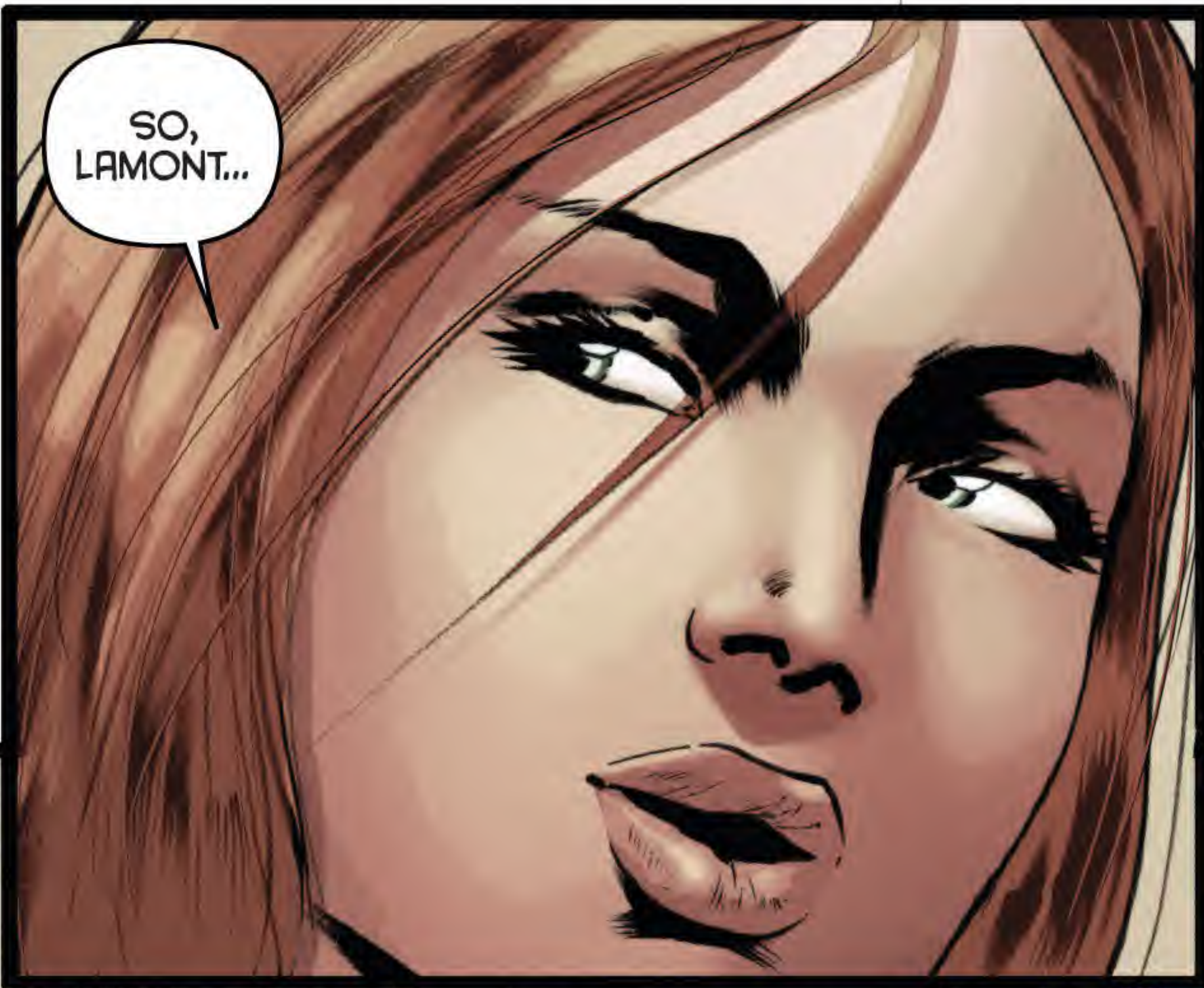
IT IS TIME,  
THOUGH, THAT  
I BID YOU  
*FAREWELL.*

THE AUTHORITIES  
ARE CERTAIN TO  
ARRIVE SOON,  
AND WE RARELY  
GET ON WELL.

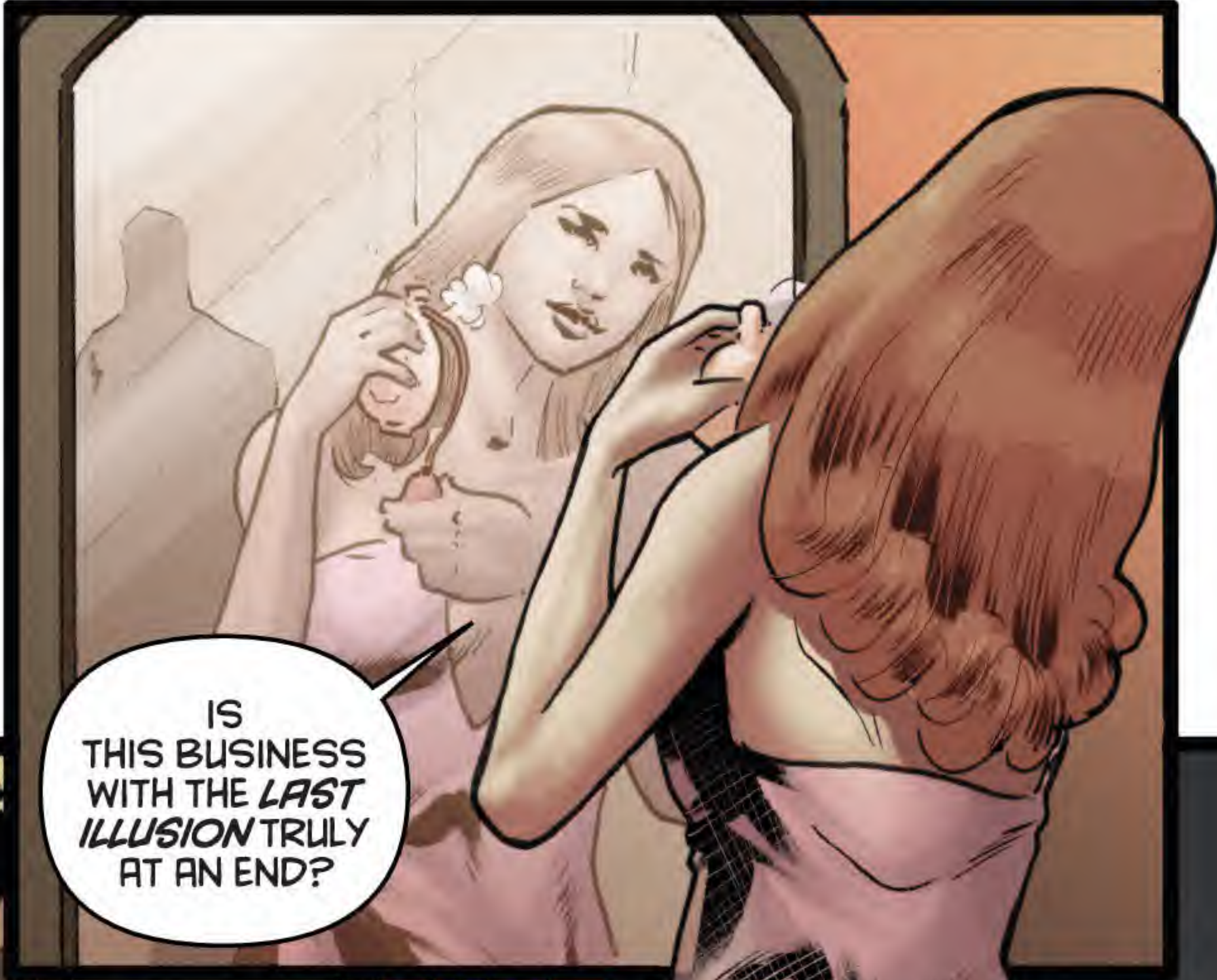
PERHAPS  
YOUR GIFT FOR  
*HYPNOSIS*  
WOULD BE  
AS USEFUL AS  
YOUR GUNS.

I'M SURE NONE  
OF THESE POOR  
SURVIVORS WANT  
TO *REMEMBER*  
WHAT HAPPENED  
HERE TONIGHT.





SO,  
LAMONT...

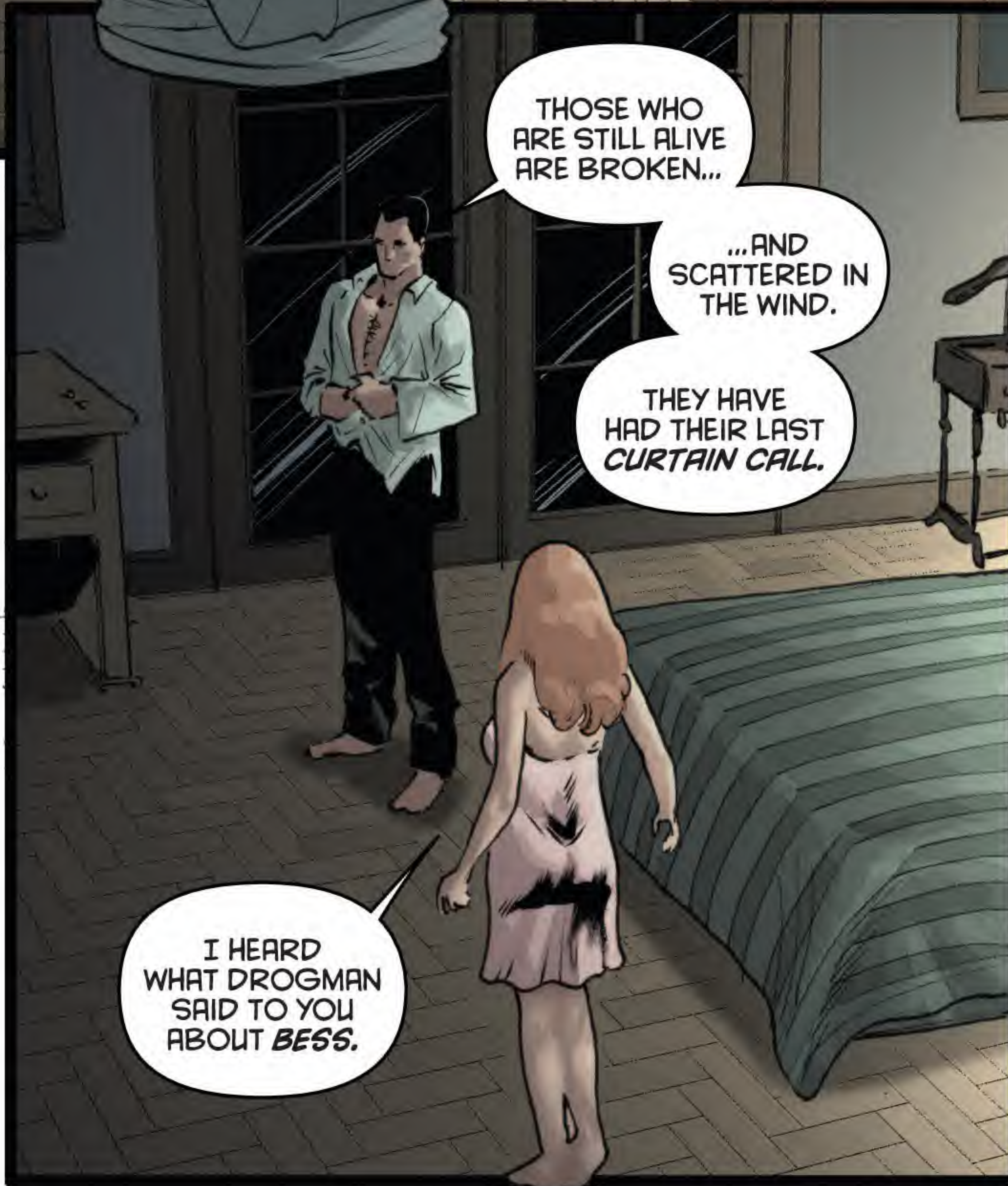


IS  
THIS BUSINESS  
WITH THE *LAST  
ILLUSION* TRULY  
AT AN END?



AFTER THE ATTACK  
IN LOS ANGELES, THE  
SOCIETY OF UNITED  
MAGICIANS IS ALL BUT  
*DESTROYED*.

MANY CIVILIANS  
DIED, BUT IT  
SEEMED AS THOUGH  
THE ATTACKERS  
FOCUSED ON THE  
SOCIETY FIRST.



THOSE WHO  
ARE STILL ALIVE  
ARE BROKEN...

...AND  
SCATTERED IN  
THE WIND.

THEY HAVE  
HAD THEIR LAST  
*CURTAIN CALL*.

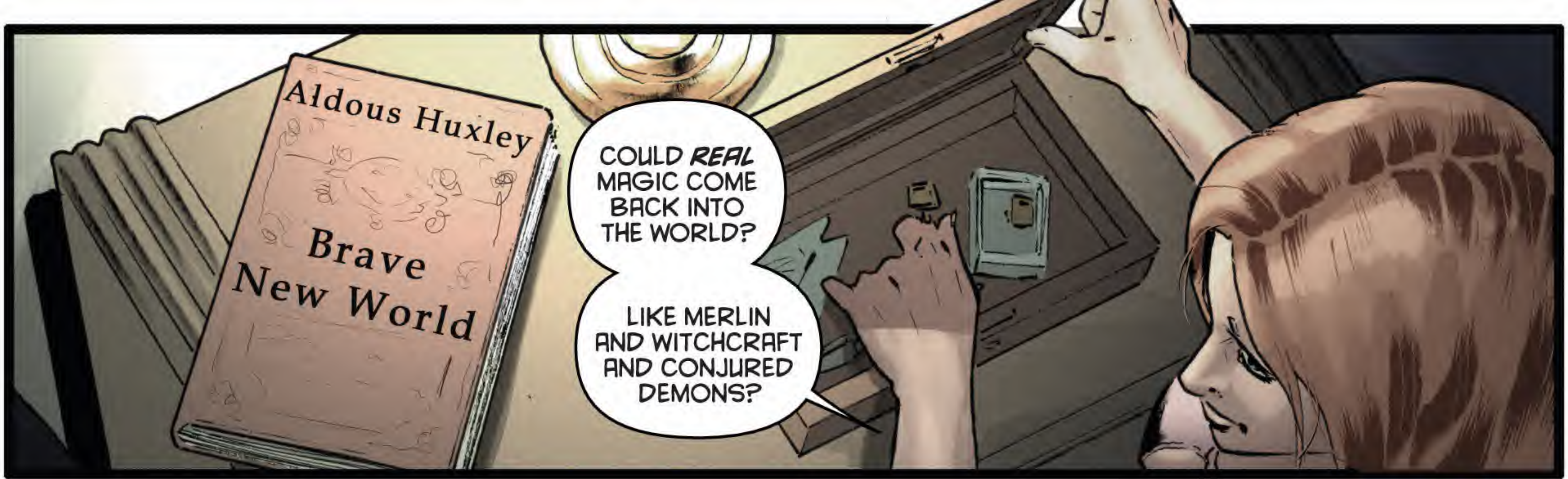
I HEARD  
WHAT DROGMAN  
SAID TO YOU  
ABOUT *BESS*.



IS IT  
TRUE?

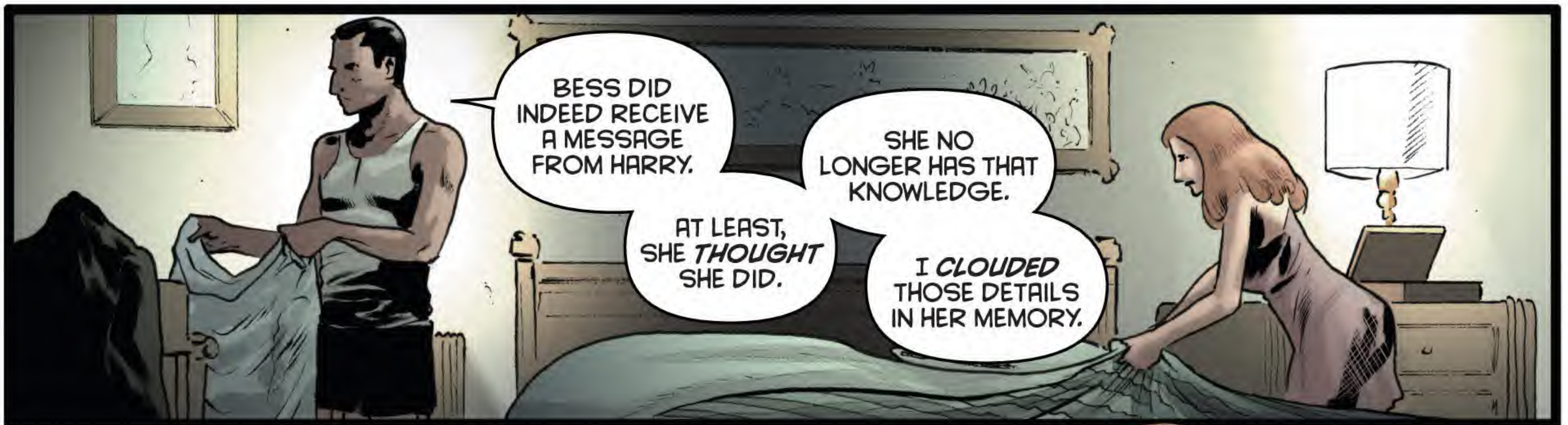
THEY WERE AFTER  
HER BECAUSE  
*HOUDINI* SENT  
HER A MESSAGE  
FROM *BEYOND  
THE GRAVE*?





COULD *REAL* MAGIC COME BACK INTO THE WORLD?

LIKE MERLIN AND WITCHCRAFT AND CONJURED DEMONS?



BESS DID INDEED RECEIVE A MESSAGE FROM HARRY.

SHE NO LONGER HAS THAT KNOWLEDGE.

AT LEAST, SHE *THOUGHT* SHE DID.

I *CLOUDED* THOSE DETAILS IN HER MEMORY.

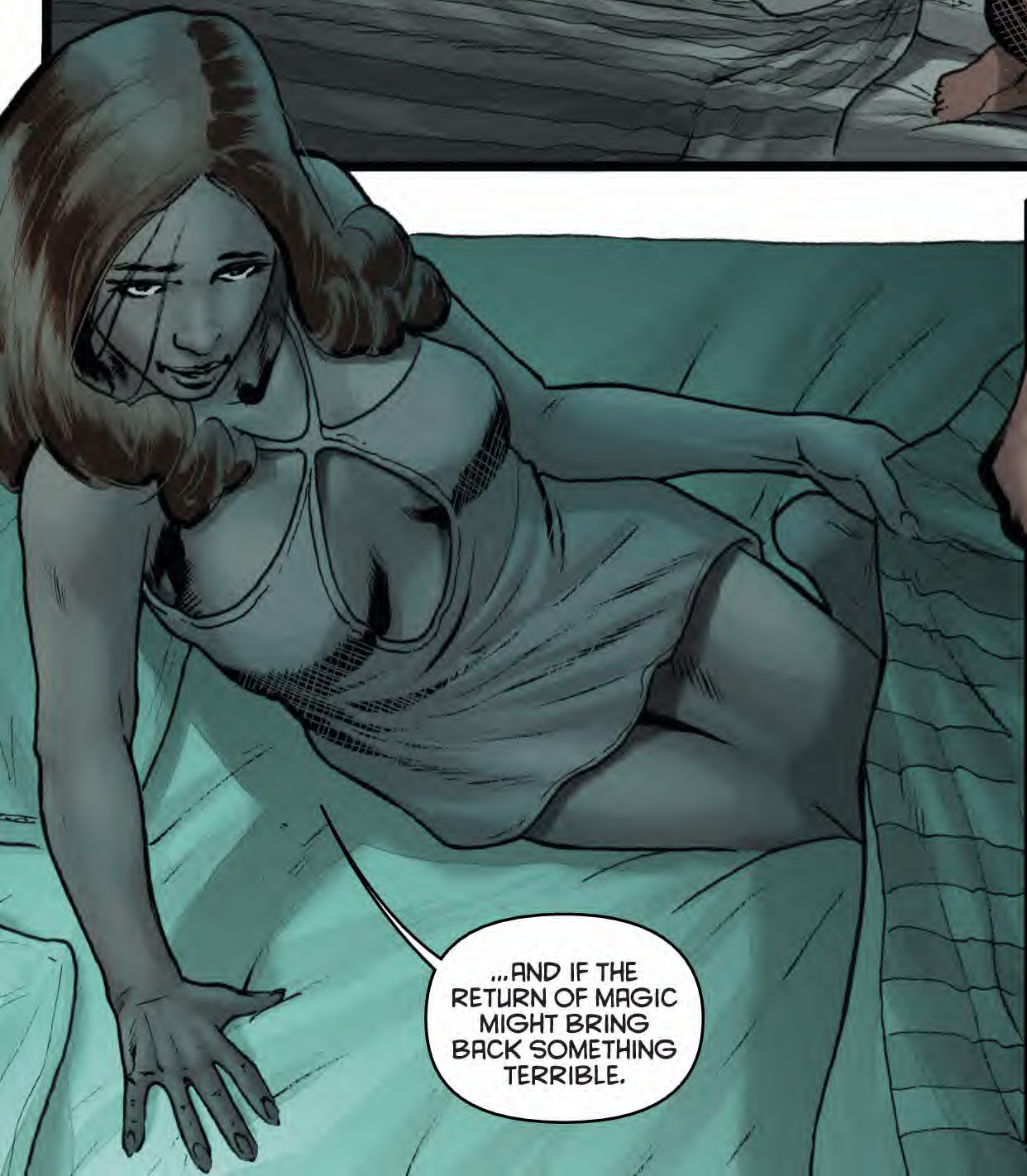


BUT YOU KNOW THE *SECRET*.

YOU KNOW THE TRUTH...

...IF MAGIC IS REAL...

...IF IT CAN COME BACK...



...AND IF THE RETURN OF MAGIC MIGHT BRING BACK SOMETHING TERRIBLE.



TONIGHT, MY DEAR, I AM *LAMONT CRANSTON*...

...*NOT* THE SHADOW...

...AND LAMONT CRANSTON CAN THINK OF *BETTER* CONVERSATION TOPICS.



HA  
HA HA

HA HA  
HA  
HA

AS FOR THE  
*SECRET OF  
MAGIC...*

*...OF THE LAST  
ILLUSION...*

*...IS IT TRUE  
OR SIMPLY MORE  
MISDIRECTION?*

ONLY THE  
SHADOW  
KNOWS.

END





## IN STORES NOW

**DOC SAVAGE: THE SPIDER'S WEB #1:** While responding to a devastating earthquake in South America, Doc Savage and company discover that not only was the disaster far from natural, but that it seems to be linked to a menace that Doc faced many years before. As he begins to investigate, Doc discovers that a number of closed cases that he had considered to be isolated threats were in fact part of a larger web that he never suspected before now.

## DAVID F. WALKER, THE 2015 GLYPH COMICS AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR, RETURNS TO SHAFT!

This February, critically acclaimed author David F. Walker (DC Comic's *Cyborg*) will continue the legacy of Ernest Tidyman's iconic private detective, John Shaft, in an all-new comic book series, *Shaft: Imitation of Life*, illustrated by Dietrich Smith. The first issue will debut in February 2016 alongside *Shaft's Revenge*, the first Shaft prose novel in 40 years.

*Imitation of Life* takes place following the events of Walker's 2015 comic book miniseries, *Shaft: A Complicated Man* - a six-part storyline that won a 2015 Glyph Comics Award and was nominated for the Dwayne McDuffie Award for Diversity. After a high-profile case puts him in the headlines, private detective John Shaft searches for something low-profile to keep him out of the spotlight and out of danger... and takes a missing person case that proves to be more difficult than he thought. At the same time, he is hired to be a consultant on a low budget film that may or may not be based on his life, and proves to be as dangerous as any job he's ever had. But when there's danger about, John Shaft won't cop out - even if it means squaring off against sadistic gangsters that want him dead.

"The idea for the new miniseries, *Shaft: Imitation of Life*, is one that's been in my head for a long time, and is something that I'm really excited about," says Walker. "This has been a really fun story to develop."

New series artist Dietrich Smith, whose work previously graced the pages of Dynamite's *Army of Darkness* and *Vampirella*, says, "Of all the great action heroes I watched and imitated as a youngster, Shaft was at the top - a private eye with a chip on his shoulder, an attitude that dared anyone to try him. Having the opportunity to draw the smoothest man alive is something I'm very excited about."

Dynamite advance-solicited the *Shaft's Revenge* prose novel in Diamond Comic Distributors' October Previews catalog, the premiere source of merchandise for the comic book specialty market. *Shaft: Imitation of Life* #1 will be solicited in the upcoming December catalog; both the prose novel and #1 comic book issue correspond to release dates in February 2016. Fans are encouraged to reserve copies of Shaft with their local comic book retailers.

## HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS | DECEMBER

